

REMARKS

The Official Action of September 21, 2004, and the prior art cited and relied upon therein have been carefully studied. The claims in the application remain as claims 1-17, and these claims all define patentable subject matter warranting their allowance. Accordingly, the applicants hereby respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance.

For the record, the Office Action Summary page of the Office Action mailed September 21, 2004, is blank under the headings "**Disposition of Claims**" and "**Priority under 35 USC §119**".

Applicants have claimed priority of their two Japanese priority applications, both filed on September 25, 2002, and applicants submitted certified copies of these two priority documents with applicants' communication to the PTO of April 14, 2004. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request the PTO to acknowledge receipt of applicants' papers filed under §119.

Claims 1-7 have been allowed. Applicants accordingly understand that these claims are deemed by the PTO

to define novel and unobvious subject matter under §§102 and 103.

Claim 8 has now been amended to make it depend from claim 1. Accordingly, claims 8 and 9 now incorporate the subject matter of claim 1, and therefore claims 8 and 9 should now be allowed along with claims 1-7.

In view of the amendment to claim 8, applicants need not address the rejection of claims 8 and 9 under 35 USC 103. For the record, however, applicants reserve the right to pursue, in a continuing application, claims of the same scope or similar scope as claims 8 and 9 in their original form.

Claims 10-17 have been rejected under §102 as anticipated by Masumoto et al U.S. published patent application 2002/0097974A1 (Masumoto). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The statement of the rejection includes: "the V-shaped groove with the gradually increased of the groove to receive the optical fibers;...." This statement seems to be missing one or more words presumably due to a typographical or clerical error, and is thus difficult for applicants to understand. However, if the rejection is intended to state that Masumoto discloses "a V-shape defined by two side walls which form therebetween an angle which is gradually increased

in a portion of said grooved portion on the side of said substrate, in a direction toward said shoulder" as previously called for in claims 10 and 12, then such statement would be incorrect, as there is no such disclosure in Masumoto.

Perhaps, however, such language in claims 10 and 12 was misunderstood. Accordingly, such language in claims 10 and 12 has now been amended cosmetically to place these claims (and the claims which depend therefrom) in improved form for U.S. practice. Applicants wish to emphasize that the amendments in claims 10 and 12 are not "narrowing" amendments because the scope of the claims has not been reduced; no limitations have been added and none are intended, and such amendments are not substantial amendments relating to patentability.

Applicants respectfully invite the examiner's attention to Figs. 9 and 10 which graphically illustrate an embodiment according to claims 10 and 12. Please note that at position 10A the groove in question has an angle of  $\theta_1$ . The groove then begins to widen gradually so that at position 10B it has an angle of  $\theta_2$ . The groove continues to widen so that at position 10C such groove has an even large angle of  $\theta_3$ .

No such subject matter is disclosed in or by Masumoto, and such subject matter is moreover nonobvious from Masumoto.

Accordingly, Matsumoto does not anticipate and the rejection should certainly be withdrawn as regards claims 10, 12 and the claims which depend therefrom.

As regards claims 11 and 15, as well as the claims which depend therefrom, an example is illustrated in Figs. 11 and 12. The substrates covered by these claims have grooves which progressively become deeper. Thus, as shown in Figs. 11 and 12, at position 12A the depth of the apex of the groove corresponds to a height of H1. This height progressively changes as claimed so that further on at position 12B, the depth of the apex of the groove is H2. Then, at position 12C, the depth of the apex of the groove is H3. Masumoto contains no such disclosure, and therefore claims 11 and 15, and the claims which depend therefrom, define novel subject matter over Masumoto, i.e. there is no anticipation.

No rejection has been imposed under §103, and applicants agree that such claimed subject matter would not have been obvious from Masumoto.

As applicants have done with claims 10 and 12, applicants have also done with claims 11 and 15, i.e. applicants have made some minor cosmetic amendments in these claims to place such claims in improved form for U.S. practice. Such amendments are not "narrowing" amendments because the scope of the claims has not been reduced; no

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limitations have been added and none are intended, and such amendments are not substantial amendments relating to patentability.

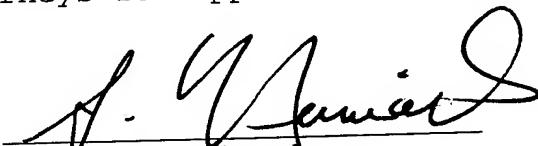
The prior art documents made of record and not applied have been noted, along with the implication that such documents are deemed by the PTO to be insufficiently pertinent to warrant their application against any of applicants' claims.

Applicants believe that they have addressed and resolved all issues, whereby all the claims of the present application should now be in condition for formal allowance. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and early formal allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

BROWDY AND NEIMARK, P.L.L.C.  
Attorneys for Applicant(s)

By



Sheridan Neimark  
Sheridan Neimark  
Registration No. 20,520

SN:jaa  
Telephone No.: (202) 628-5197  
Facsimile No.: (202) 737-3528  
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